H-3033.1			

HOUSE BILL 2373

State of Washington 57th Legislature 2002 Regular Session

By Representatives Delvin, Nixon, Mulliken, Anderson, Holmquist, Ahern, Casada, Morell and Sump

Read first time . Referred to Committee on .

- 1 AN ACT Relating to requiring the teaching of the Constitutions of
- 2 the United States and Washington state; amending RCW 28A.230.170;
- 3 adding new sections to chapter 28A.230 RCW; and creating new sections.
- 4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:
- 5 LEGISLATIVE INTENT
- 6 <u>NEW SECTION.</u> **Sec. 1.** Most state constitutions have similar
- 7 preambles that acknowledge the Supreme Ruler of the universe, Almighty
- 8 God, or providence for the gift of liberty. Government is then given
- 9 the constitutional responsibility to protect and maintain individual
- 10 rights. This is the fundamental reason given in the Declaration of
- 11 Independence for creating the United States of America. Yet our
- 12 schools neglect to teach this principle.
- The people want to give children, and their children's children,
- 14 the blessings of liberty. Schools must teach the constitution for this
- 15 to happen. This is not a separation of church and state issue. The
- 16 issue is teaching the substance and meanings of the liberties provided
- 17 by the United States and Washington state Constitutions.

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- NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 28A.230 RCW to read as follows:
- 4 RCW 28A.230.170 states: "The study of the Constitution of the
- 5 United States and the Constitution of the state of Washington shall be
- 6 a condition prerequisite to graduation from public and private high
- 7 schools of this state." However, the courts have ruled "any study
- 8 constitutes study." Therefore, the superintendent of public
- 9 instruction has left it up to the teacher. Teachers have not provided
- 10 any noticeable instruction on the Washington state Constitution.
- 11 This measure requires public and private school libraries to stock
- 12 printed copies of the Declaration of Independence, the United States
- 13 Constitution, the Washington state Constitution, the federalists
- 14 papers, and the anti-federalist papers. Each classroom shall display
- 15 the preamble and the first twelve sections of Article I of the
- 16 Washington state Constitution in school classrooms.

17 RELATING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE TO THE CONSTITUTIONS

18 OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

- 19 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.230.170 and 1985 c 341 s 1 are each amended to
- 20 read as follows:
- 21 The study of the Constitution of the United States and the
- 22 Constitution of the state of Washington shall be a condition
- 23 prerequisite to graduation from the public and private high schools of
- 24 this state. The state board of education acting upon the advice of the
- 25 superintendent of public instruction shall provide by rule ((or
- 26 regulation)) for the implementation of this section into the K-12
- 27 social studies curriculum. Local school boards are responsible for
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- 28 providing books that explain the meaning and substance of the
- 29 Constitutions of the United States and the state of Washington. Local

school boards are responsible for displaying copies of the Declaration

- 31 of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the United States Constitution,
- 32 and the Washington state Constitution.
- 33 <u>NEW SECTION.</u> **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
- 34 RCW to read as follows:
- 35 The word "study" in RCW 28A.230.170 includes:

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1 (1) Illustrating, by teacher instruction, how the Declaration of 2 Independence provided the outline for both the United States 3 Constitution and the Washington state Constitution;

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- (2) Relating each section of the Washington state Constitution to statements made in the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution;
- 7 (3) Teaching the heritage and meaning of this statement from the 8 Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, 9 that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator 10 with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments 11 are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent 12 13 of the governed." Suggested sources are: The Magna Carta (1215), the 1628 Petition of Right to King Charles I, the writings of Sir Edward 14 15 Coke (1552-1634), John Locke (1632-1704), The Spirit of Laws (1748) by 16 Charles De Montesquieu, and Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780);
- 17 (4) Teacher instruction on The Northwest Ordinance, which sets the 18 requirements for states to join the union shall be required. Article 19 3 states: "Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good 20 government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of 21 education shall forever be encouraged...";
- 22 (5) Teaching the heritage and meaning of the religious freedom Article I, section 10 of the 23 statement of Washington state 24 Constitution. Suggested student readings include: Thomas Jefferson's 25 "Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (1786), and James Madison's 26 "Memorial and Remonstrance." The purpose of this instruction is to illustrate the struggle for obtaining "absolute freedom of conscience 27 in all matters of religious sentiment, ... " as stated in Article I, 28 29 section 10 of the Washington state Constitution;
- 30 (6) Requiring that students be encouraged to memorize the preamble 31 of the United States Constitution along with the preamble and Article 32 I, section 1 of the Washington state Constitution;
- 33 (7) Students shall read and be taught George Washington's First 34 Inaugural Address and his Farewell Address;
- (8) Testing, including state standardized testing, on the meanings of the constitutions and on the meaning of such words as: Endowed, unalienable, created equal, tranquility, posterity, ordain, blessings, and licentiousness;

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- 1 (9) Displaying the preamble and the first twelve sections of the 2 Washington state Constitution in each classroom with a note stating:
- 3 "For the complete text of the Washington state Constitution go to the
- 4 school library"; and
- 5 (10) Illustrating, with teacher instruction, the relationship
- 6 between the "Pledge of Allegiance to the United States" and the
- 7 Washington state Constitution (the preamble, Article I, section 1, and
- 8 Article I, section 10). This instruction shall be taught at the time
- 9 the "Pledge of Allegiance" is taught.
- 10 <u>NEW SECTION.</u> **Sec. 5.** Part headings used in this act are not any 11 part of the law.

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